

# Sonning Deanery Branch Newsletter



January 2019, Winter Issue



Happy New Year ! I trust you all did lots of ringing over the Christmas period. It can be hard work if your church has lots of services, as ours does, but the sound of ringing is really appreciated by those who come to church (and those who don't).

The new year brings new opportunities for us all to develop our ringing – not just our personal skills and satisfaction, but also the strength of our bands and the respect of the public for ringing.

Last year the centenary of the Armistice gave ringing a boost, with a lot of publicity and more ringers than expected coming forward as recruits. If you are one of them, then a warm welcome, we hope you will find ringing a rewarding activity. And to the rest of us, please try to support them (and any other recruits) in their journey beyond the first step as a ringer.

It's not long until the **AGM on 16th February**, when I hope to see many of you. As well as coming together to enjoy ringing, singing and eating, it's the one occasion when you can all have a voice discussing how things are run on your behalf, and deciding what you would like to see in the coming year. The officers will do their best to implement the decisions, and we always welcome offers of help from new volunteers. We particularly need a Training Officer to fill the post that has been vacant for two years.

The survey last year showed a significant unmet need for training. I have organised several courses since then but with a training officer able to concentrate on this we could do much more. The training officer does not have to tutor all the courses – several people are able to do that – but he/she does need to have the organisational drive to make courses happen.

Best wishes for a happy and successful 2019.

*John Harrison, Chairman*

## Calendar

### Saturday 19th January

Arborfield (6)

10.30am—12 noon Branch Practice

### Saturday 16th February

Wokingham All Saints (8)

Branch AGM

Ringing: 3-4pm, followed by service & tea  
and then the AGM at 5.15pm

### Saturday 16th March

Sandhurst (6)

4.30pm—6pm Branch Practice

### Saturday 19th January

Arborfield (6)

10.30am—12 noon Branch Practice

Monthly Tuesday afternoon practices  
(2-3.30pm at Binfield) on 8th Jan, 5th Feb  
& 5th March (provisionally).

Surprise Major practices (Wednesday  
8pm –9.30pm) at Wokingham All Saints  
on 9th Jan, 13th Feb & 13th Mar  
(provisionally).

Young Ringers Practice (2nd Sunday of  
the month, 2.30 –4pm) 13th Jan, 10th  
Feb and 10th Mar, various towers  
(provisionally).

## Facebook Advertising at Arborfield

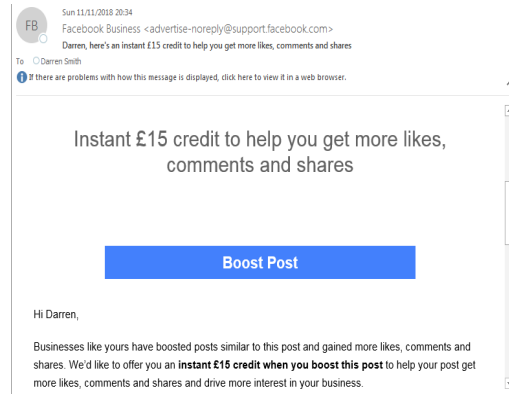
Arborfield Church Bell Ringers have had a [Facebook page](#) since mid-2016, when their [website](#) was launched. Adding a Facebook page was something of an experiment which apparently hadn't paid off; no-one found the page by chance, and the only people who "liked" the page were a handful of other ringers and members of the congregation at Arborfield.

This all changed in November, when I received, out of the blue, an email from Facebook (opposite). I wasn't going to look a gift horse in the mouth, so I set about creating a general, recruitment-styled post (see below right) to use on Facebook to apply this credit to.

When applying the credit, I was able to target those I wanted to see a "Sponsored Post" (you may be familiar with this if you use Facebook). I could have made this visible to anyone anywhere in the world, but instead, I chose to restrict the post to only those who lived within 3 kilometres of Arborfield Church. The post is seen by roughly the same number of people regardless of the restrictions you apply. The promotion ran for 7 days.

During the following week, the enquiries started coming in. Facebook told me it was seen by 817 people directly because of the promotion. Views from other people and since the promotion ended means it has now been seen by 974 people.

I wasn't intending to hold a taster session, I just said that in the post. But in the event, we needed to hold one, to which 6 people attended (5 from the Facebook page, and 1 other person from another source).



Summary	Preview			
<p><b>You targeted men and women, ages 18-65+ who live in 1 location.</b></p> <p><b>Location – Living in:</b> United Kingdom: Church Lane, Reading (+3 km) England</p> <p><b>Age:</b> 18-65+</p> <p><a href="#">Hide full summary</a></p> <p><b>This ad ran for 7 days.</b></p>	<p><b>Results</b></p> <table border="1"><tr><td><b>817</b> People Reached [?]</td><td><b>4</b> Messaging</td><td><b>£15.00</b> Total Spend [?]</td></tr></table>	<b>817</b> People Reached [?]	<b>4</b> Messaging	<b>£15.00</b> Total Spend [?]
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In Summary, because of our Facebook advert, we have had:

- 2 people who exchanged messages on Facebook, but haven't come along yet (maybe after Christmas ...)
- 3 people who came to the taster session, but haven't been since
- 2 people who came to the taster session, and have since been to a practice (but were unavailable for the next two)
- 1 person who couldn't come to the taster session, but has since been to two practices (and previously rang as a child)

We had three other child learners join us in September and October, so we are somewhat learner-heavy at the moment so we will not be planning any more recruitment for a while!

For those towers who have no learners and are interested in recruiting, assuming someone in your tower has a Facebook account, get them to create a page for your bell tower. If you are lucky like us, maybe Facebook will eventually bung you some free credit. But having said that, just £15 got us 8 contacts, so you may feel it is worth buying a listing. I am certain that this is more likely to succeed than putting posters up on noticeboards these days, being as everyone now walks around looking at their phones! If anyone would like advice, please get in touch

Email: [info@arborfieldbells.org.uk](mailto:info@arborfieldbells.org.uk).

**Darren Smith, Arborfield**

## A change at Waltham St. Lawrence

After twenty-one years as Tower Captain here at WStL, I am delighted to say that I have passed the position/baton/keys/ropes over to Jacquie Hazell, who has run our practices for many months and has been our Tower Captain, in all but name, during that time.

I took over from Anne Yates, who had rung here for 50 years, in 1997, when she and Michael Morley moved to Ventnor on the Isle of Wight. We had a party to honour her many achievements, which culminated in raising the considerable sum of money needed to get the bells re-hung in a steel frame, replacing the previous wooden one. The work was done by Taylors of Loughborough. My only problem that evening at the party was that I forgot to step back with all the other ringers as Anne said, as all good treble ringers do, "Look to ... She's going ... She's gone" with which she passed the keys to me, and here they've been these twenty-one years.

During those years ringers have come and gone but we have managed to keep the bells ringing here. That ringing is now solely due, as in many towers, to the help and assistance of people living outside our own parish.

Over the years our ringers have numbered a vicars wife, a publican, someone who painted the whole of the inside of the church (yes, every square inch of it), engineers, a mathematician, computer wizards, a physiotherapist, and gardeners to name but a few. If we could get all six bells ringing Rounds and Call Changes each Sunday, I would be more than happy. It is having all the bells ringing that we long for, not complex methods.

Small that we are as a band, the one thing that I am most grateful for, in addition to the unstinting help from ringers from elsewhere in the Sonning Deanery, is that we have remained, as under Anne before me, an essentially happy band, which I am sure will continue under Jacquie Hazell's guidance.

*Derek Titford (ex Tower Captain)*

## Words from Wargrave: a Ringing Master's reflection of the last 12 months



Practices have continued to be well supported, not only by the Wargrave ringers themselves but also by a number of regular and very much appreciated visitors, mainly from other towers in the Loddon Hub. Sundays we, more often than not, ring all eight bells with the Wargrave band, and our ability to ring call changes and strike the bells has been steadily improving.



Two new recruits, who started at the end of 2017, have been making excellent progress. Sally rang her first rounds on Jan 3<sup>rd</sup>, passed level 1 of Learning the Ropes the following week, and level 2 three weeks later. 'A' levels had to take precedence over ringing, but come the summer Sally was ringing the tenor behind to QPs and mastering the treble to plain methods by the time she went to University in October.



Imogen (age 12) attained level 1 in August; she had been ringing rounds and call changes on eight since March, but ringing our bells up just needed her to grow a little more. Level 2 followed in November and Imogen has rung for her first wedding. She has attended Young Ringer practices, and did extremely well at a Bucks and Berks competition band practice at Twyford, ringing call changes on 8 in every touch of the evening, making huge progress, and holding her own amongst much older and more experienced ringers.

Anne-Marie Adams was presented with a well-deserved Level 2 pass in January, and is progressing through her Level 3 targets. We were delighted that she rang her first QP, tenor behind to doubles, on the centenary of the armistice (see photo on Armistice anniversary page), and treble to minor will soon follow I'm sure.

The rest of the regular band are very supportive, helping ensure that we ring the bells on Sunday, practice and special occasions, and that the less experienced make progress; this is too short to mention each and every one, but they are what makes the Wargrave band and practice what it is, and why it is a pleasure to run the ringing.

John Coombes does a brilliant job of organising and managing the tower and keeping us all in order. He has ensured the village continues to know about, and appreciate its bells, arranging open tower events, visits for scouts, rainbows and brownies, and putting articles in the village news. In June he arranged for the foundry to inspect the bells, and apart from tightening up the nuts holding the tenor on its headstock, which considerably improved its "go", no seriously urgent major work was found to be needed. Some work was recommended, which should improve the overall handling of the bells, and we plan to go ahead with this early in 2019.



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In September Imogen's friend Tabitha started to learn, and then Tabitha's Dad, Robbie. It has been a bit of a challenge to maintain frequent and regular practices for them, but Tabitha is developing a nice handling style, and found that ringing up and down on the dumb bell at Shiplake was far more possible than on the treble at Wargrave!

The visit to the pub after practice on the first Wednesday of the month has continued to be a regular feature, and practice night has seen us ring Cambridge Major and Stedman Triples, but if we don't quite have enough for the eight then Stedman Doubles and various Surprise Minor. Call changes, Grandsire, Plain Bob and other strange methods and exercises that I happen to think of also feature regularly. Some, like the 2nd ringing Bristol front work, just don't have names. The more experienced ringers have had to become very adept at fitting around the learners during some of the teaching exercises!

As well as running the ringing at Wargrave, I've had three wonderful trips to Ypres, the first two for intensive training of the fledgling band, and the last with three other Loddon Hub ringers, when we ran a workshop for two of the locals, joined their practice night, and took a load of spare stays as Ash is hard to source in Belgium. I then joined the leper band for their first outing to Kent, a learning curve for them so steep as to be vertical!

Overall the Wargrave band is flourishing, and it has been great to see the progress especially over the last two or three years. Like all ringers and bands we have our ups and downs and some days just nothing goes right for anyone. That is soon countered when someone "gets it" and does really well. Even if we are short of numbers we will find something that we can do, and that helps overall progress. Most of all we try to have as much fun as possible and not to eat too many chocolates. So thank you Wargrave ringers, and all our wonderful visitors; keep coming and we will have a load more fun!

*Vinni Sullivan, Wargrave*

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## Commemorating the Armistice & Ringing Remembers

### **Easthampstead 11 November 1260 Plain Bob Triples**

1 Elliott W Aldridge  
2 Barbara E Wells  
3 Anna Stowe  
4 Daniel Chafen  
5 Bradley Herrington  
6 Thomas S Helyer  
7 Stephen C Wells (C)  
8 Andrew I Mitchell  
First triples 1 & 8.  
Rung to commemorate the centenary of the WW1 Armistice.

### **Rounds, Call Changes and Grandsire Doubles**

1 Anna Stowe  
2 Barbara E Wells  
3 Beccy Wire/Steve Wells (C)  
4 Rachel Moss  
5 Bradley Herrington  
6 Andrew I Mitchell

Ringing for the "Battles Over". Beccy Wire is a "Ringing Remembers" recruit.



## ‘Ringing Remembers’ continued...



In the past few months St Andrew's bell ringers at Sonning have been joined by three new ringers who were inspired by the *Ringing Remembers* initiative. They wanted to learn to ring so that they could take part in the nationwide event by ringing on the centenary of the Armistice on 11 November 2018.

The bell ringers have been busy teaching Avis, Hazel and Karen to ring, and I'm delighted to say that they all were able to take part in the ringing at St Andrew's on Armistice Day. We rang the bells half-muffled before the morning service, and at 12:30 we rang again to take part in the nationwide ringing of bells at that time. Finally we rang the bells starting at 7:05p.m.

to be part of the Commemorative Remembrance event that took place on King George's Field in Sonning and finished with lighting the beacon – one of many beacons lit at that time throughout the country. The photo above includes the new bell ringers; the picture frame displays the two Sonning ringers who were killed in WW1.

### **Wargrave 11 November 1260 Plain Bob Doubles**

- 1 Jenny M Page
- 2 Lavinia Sullivan
- 3 Kitty Gingell
- 4 Anthony W Gordon
- 5 David Sullivan (C)
- 6 Anne-Marie Adams

First attempt: 6.  
Rung for remembrance



### **St Mary, Twyford Sunday, 11 November 1260 Plain Bob Doubles**

- 1 Naomi Fairbrother
- 2 Graham Slade
- 3 Matthew Steele
- 4 Richard Bennett
- 5 Simon Farrar (C)
- 6 Julian Pettifer

First inside: 3. Rung half muffled in memory of the fallen.

Sgt Alfred Herbert Grooms MM, 2/4th Battalion Royal Leicestershire Regiment, killed in action 24th March 1918, was the great grandfather of the ringer of the 5th.

Lt Charles D D Swain, 186th Siege Battery, Royal Garrison Artillery, died 29th Sept 1917 in the battle of Polygon Wood, Ypres, was the great great uncle of the tenor ringer.

"Battle's over".

### **Finchampstead 11 November**

**Ringing for the morning service (half-muffled), at 12.30pm and at 7.05pm including Plain Bob Doubles, Grand-sire Doubles & Plain Bob Minor**

- Hugh Dempster  
Mary Ede  
Pearl Larkins  
Derek Barrett  
Richard Wheeler  
Tricia Amos  
Judith Witting  
Helen Anderson  
Jo Lewis

### **St Paul, Wokingham 11 November 1260 Grandsire Triples**

- 1 Geoffrey K Cook
- 2 Susan E Davenport
- 3 Elizabeth O'Brien
- 4 Thomas Blomley
- 5 Christopher P Cole
- 6 Alan K Barsby
- 7 Kenneth R Davenport (C)
- 8 Derek Palmer

### **Hurst Sunday, 11 November Rounds rung with the bells open at 12:30**

- 1 Jeremy Carpenter
  - 2 Bob Davies
  - 3 Duncan Kendall
  - 4 Keith Milner
  - 5 Stephanie Milner
  - 6 Wendy Pinches
  - 7 Graham Slade (C)
  - 8 Kieran Slade
  - 9 Owen Slade
  - 10 Sue Slade
  - 11 Nick Willson
- Ringing Remembers recruits 1, 3, 4, 5 & 11

### **White Waltham Sunday, 11 November Plain Bob Minimus and Rounds Rang non stop for 15 minutes the said methods.**

- 1 Lesley Graves
  - 2 Simon Graves
  - 3 Caroline Andrew (C)
  - 4 Andy Eden
  - 5 -
  - 6 Derek Brayne
- Rang at 07.05pm for The Battle's Over on the day of the 100th Anniversary of The Armistice.

**Waltham St Lawrence**  
**Sunday, 11 November**  
**Rounds and Call Changes**  
**(half-muffled)**

1 Vikki Bulbeck  
 2 Holley Wakeling  
 3 Martha Hazell  
 4 Ann Thompson  
 5 Kate Titford  
 6 Allan Crisp  
 7 Derek Titford  
 8 Benjamin King  
 9 Lesley S Cross  
 10 Jacqueline Hazell

**All Saints, Wokingham**  
**Sunday 11 November**  
**Call Changes, Grandsire & Stedman Triples**

1 Barbara G Smith  
 2 Katie Armitage  
 3 Jane A Mellor  
 4 Angela Lazda  
 5 Jon P Tutchner  
 6 Kristin L Fitch  
 7 Nigel A L Mellor  
 8 Stephen R Smith  
 9 Mary Spence  
 10 Tom Blomley  
 11 Alan K Barsby  
 12 John A Harrison

## Peals & Quarter Peals

Sorry, too many QPs to include them all, more in the next issue!

**Shiplake**  
**21 December**  
**5040 Grandsire Triples**

1 Josie S Irving  
 2 Colin G Newman  
**3 Sue Portsmouth**  
 4 Stuart F Gibson  
 5 James M Champion  
 6 Christopher M Tuckett  
 7 Kenneth R Davenport (C)  
 8 Robert A Partridge

**First peal 3.** 25th peal for the Guild, 5.

**St Paul, Wokingham**  
**4 November**  
**1260 Grandsire Triples**

1 Stephen C Wells  
 2 Geoffrey K Cook (C)  
 3 Susan E Davenport  
 4 Barbara E Wells  
 5 Kenneth R Davenport  
 6 Alan K Barsby  
 7 Christopher P Cole  
 8 Peter J Davenport

Half muffled for All Souls service

**Twyford**  
**22 December**  
**1260 Grandsire Doubles**

1 Edward Owen  
 2 Pam Elliston  
 3 Charles Hobson  
 4 Richard Bennett  
 5 Simon Farrar (C)  
 6 Freddie Hodgkinson

First quarter at first attempt: 1, 6.  
 (Photo right of the band)



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